

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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USIA-06 EB-07 OMB-01 ACDA-05 AID-05 IO-10 OES-03

ERDA-05 /109 W

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R 221300Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8844

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

ISLAMABAD 7427

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 6859

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: VFOR, IN, PK

SUBJ: INDIAN REACTIONS ON INDO-PAK TALKS

REF: NEW DELHI 6734

SUMMARY: THE INDIANS EXPRESS FRUSTRATION AT PAK INABILITY TO NEGOTIATE TO CONCLUSION ON CIVIL AVIATION ISSUE IN RECENT BILATERAL TALKS, BUT FOUND OTHER ASPECTS OF DISCUSSIONS HELPFUL AND GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF MEETINGS FRIENDLY. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY PROFESSES PUZZLEMENT OVER THE RELUCTANCE OF PAK SIDE TO ACCEPT INDIAN OFFER OF

CONFIDENTIAL EXCHANGE OF LETTERS TO RESOLVE THE CIVIL
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AVIATION ISSUE. THE INDIANS ARE SURFACING THROUGH THE

PRESS SOME DETAILS OF THEIR THINKING ON POSSIBLE CONVENTIONAL WAR "REASSURANCES", INCLUDING FORCE THINNING AND MUTUAL INSPECTION, BUT THE INDIANS SAY THE SUBJECT WAS NOT DISCUSSED IN DETAIL DURING THE RECENT TALKS. THE INDIANS SUGGESTED A NEW TREATY ON "PEACEFUL USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY" (SEPTEL). THE INDIANS ARE HOPEFUL THAT FUTURE TALKS ON THE SALAL DAM WILL REUOLVE THIS POTENTIAL PROBLEM. THEY FOUND THE PAKS WILLING TO REVIEW FURTHER THEIR LIMITATIONS ON ISSUANCE OF PILGRIM VISAS. END SUMMARY.

1. MEA JOINT SECRETARY CHIB TOLD POLCOUNSELOR MAY 21 THAT PAK DELEGATION LEADER, FONSETOVEC AGHA SHAHI, HAD STARTED MAY 15-20 DISCUSSIONS IN DELHI WITH COMMENT THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO GET BOGGED DOWN IN LEGALITIES OF CIVIL AVIATION DISPUTE BUT TO GET TO THE POLITICAL CORE OF TME PROBLEM. INDIANS WERE PLEASED WITH THIS APPROACH, BUT AS DISCUSSIONS WORE ON, CHIB SAID, IT BECAUSE CLEAR PAKS HAD NO MANDATE TO DISCUSS EITHER SUBSTANCE OF CLAIMS OR AGREEMENT TO DROV CLAIMS. INDIAN GOVT HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO ANSWER SATISFACTORILY IN ITS OWN THINKING WHY PAK DELEGATION APPARENTLY CAME TO TALKS WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS ENABLING IT TO REACH SOLUTION WITH GOI ON CIVIL AVIATION ISSUE. CMIB SAID INDIANS HAD SUGGESTED CONFIDENTIAL EXCHANGE OF LETTERS IN WHICH PAKS WOULD AGREE NOT TO PURSUE CIVIL AVIATION CASE IN ICAO. INDIANS AND PAKS WOULD THEN AGREE TO REOPEN AIR LINKS AND GOI WOULD NOT UESTION PUBLIC PAK STATEMENT THAT GOP DID NOT PLAN TO REACTIVATE ICAO CASE WHILE CLAIMS WERE UNDER BILATERAL DISCUSSION. PAK SIDE SAID IT WAS UNABLE TO ACCEVT TMIS. CHIB SAID THAT INDIAN OBJECTIVE HAD BEEN TO GET PAKS TO PUT IN WRITING IN CONFIDENCE WHAT THEY WERE APPARENTLY WILLING TO SAY ORALLY, BUT THIS HAD FAILED. BEGIN COMMENT: IN EFFECT THE INDIANS WERE SAYING THAT IN ORDER TO MOVE AHEAD, BOTH SIDES HAD TO DROP THEIR CLAIMS. THE INDIANS WERE PREPARED TO GIVE THE PAKS "FACE" AND HASV OUT ON BMUTTO'S DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS (A FACT RAISED BY SHAMI IN EXPLAINING WHY THE PAKS COULD NOT APPEAR TO BE YIELDING TO INDIAN PRESSURE IN WITHDRAWING THE ICAO CASE) BY PUTTING THE "HARD" LANGUAGE INTO CONFIDENTIAL LETTERS. BUT THE ESSENCE OF THE INDIAN POSITION

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REMAINED UNALTERED: THE GOP MUST PROVE ITS ICAO CASE AND THE RIVAL CLAIMS MUST WASH EACH OTHER OUT. OTMERWISE ONE SIDE OR TME OTHER WOULD HAVE TO ADMIT IT WAS "WRONG" AND THAT WAS NO WAY TO MOVE AHEAD TO A NEW RELATIONSHIP. END COMMENT.

2. ALL THE CONVERSATIONS HAD BEEN VERY FRIENDLY AND IN AMICABLE ATMOSPHERE AND CHIB SAID, SIGNING, IF THIS ISSUE

COULD NOT BE RESOLVED IN THIS KIND OF CLIMATE, HE DID NOT
KNOW HOW IT COULD BE SOLVED. HE SAID THE CIVIL AVIATION
PROBLEM WAS NOW BACK TO WHERE IT WAS EVEN MONTHS EARLIER,
OR EVEN WORSE SINCE AT THAT TIME PAK FONMIN AZIZ AHMED HAD,
THE INDIANS THOUGHT, GIVEN APPROVAL TO A PLAN TO DISCONTINUE
TME ICAO CASE IF AN AGREEMENT ON CLAIMS COULD BE REACHED
BILATERALLY.

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3. ON OTHER ISSUES, CHIB SAID, TME DISCUSSIONS WERE FRANK
AND USEFUL.

A. NUCLEAR AND OTHER REASSURANCES: IF PAKISTAN WANTED
ADDITIONAL REASSURANCE TO THAT CONVEYED BY MRS. GANDHI IN HER
LETTER TO BMUTTO AFTER THE MAY 1974 INDIAN NUCLEAR TEST,
INDIA WAS PREPARED TO CONCLUDE A "NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS" AGREE-
MENT WITH PAKISTAN EITHER AS PART OF A GENERAL NONAGGRESSION

TREATY, OR IN A SEPARATE TREATY DEVOTED ONLY TO THAT SUBJECT (SEE SEPTTEL). THE INDIANS REFERRED TO THEIR "NO WAR" TREATY PROPOSAL AS DESCRIBED TO THE PAKS AT SIMLA AND SAID THIS OPTION WAS STILL OPEN. (COMENT: FONSEC KEWAL SINGH REPORTEDLY TOLD THE FRG AMBASSADOR HERE SEVERAL WEEKS AGO THAT THE INDIANS HAD SUGGESTED TO THE PAKS BOTH THINNING OUT OF FORCES ALONG THE BORDER AND MUTUAL INSPECTIONS OF CONFIDENTIAL

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FORCE DISPOSITIONS. WE DO NOT RECALL HAVING HEARD THIS SPECIFIC PROPOSAL BEFORE BUT MADRAS "HINDU" CORRESPONDENT G.K. REDDY, WRITING ABOUT THE TALKS MAY 20, SAID THE INDIANS HAD PROPOSED AT SIMLA IN 1973 THAT THERE BE A DEMILITARIZED ZONE ALONG THE BORDER SUBJECT TO MUTUAL INSPECTION. REDDY TELLS US HE HAS KNOWN OF THIS FOR A LONG TIME BUT THAT HE HAD NOT WRITTEN IT BEFORE. "TIMES OF INDIA" CORRESPONDENT DILIP MUKERJEE SPOKE IN SIMILAR TERMS TO AN EMBOFF AT LUNCH MAY 21. CMIB TOLD POLCOUNSELOR ONLY THAT VARIOUS TYPES OF FORCE REDUCTION AND INSPECTION PROPOSALS HAD BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE GOI, BUT SAID THESE WERE NOT DISCUSSED IN DETAIL AT THE RECENT INDO-PAK MEETINGS. IT SOUNDS TO US AS THOUGH THE "IN" INDIAN CORRESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN BRIEFED TO SURFACE THE INDIAN LINE ON FORCE REDUCTION AND INSPECTION IN A LOW KEY.)

B. PROPAGANDA: BOTH SIDES HAD AGAIN AGREED TO WORK AT REDUCING PROPAGANDA BROADCASTS, PARTICULARLY BY LIMITING TRANSMISSION OF "THIRD COUNTRY" COMMENTS (E.G., THE INDIANS EXPRESSED ANNOYANCE AT RADIO PAKISTAN'S USE OF NCNA PIECES ON SIKKIM) AND RESTRICTING USE OF "THIRD COUNTRY" MATERIAL TO OFFICIAL STATEMENTS. WHEN ASKED ABOUT DOMESTIC POLITICAL STATEMENTS BY THE LEADERS OF EACH COUNTRY (MRS. GANDHI'S CURRENT ELECTIONEERING IN GUJARAT, BHUTTO'S SPEECHES LAST MONTH IN THE PUNJAB), CHIB SHRUGGED AND CHANGED THE SUBJECT.

C. SALAL DAM: CHIB SAID HE WAS IMPRESSED BY GOV IRRI-GATION SEC'Y BAIG'S COMPETENCE AND WILLINGNESS TO BE COOPERATIVE AND MAKE DECISIONS. HE THOUGHT THE PAKS HAD A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THE INDIAN ENGINEERING POSITION ON THE DAM AND EXPRESSED HOPE THIS ISSUE COULD BE RESOLVED AMICABLY IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AFTER TECHNICAL DATA WAS EXCHANGED.

D. KASHMIR: CMIB SAID THAT KASHMIR DID NOT COME UP AT ALL DURING THE DISCUSSIONS. THE PAKISTAN DELEGATION DID NOT REFER TO THE SHEIKH ABDULLAH ISSUE OR THE FUTURE OF A KASHMIR SETTLEMENT. NOR DID THE INDIANS.

E. VISAS: THE PAK SIDE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE GOP HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO ADMIT ANY INDIAN PILGRIMS EXCEPT SIKHS.

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THEY ATTRIBUTED THE PROBLEM TO THEIR HOME MINISTRY BUT AGREED TO TRY TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

F. US ARMS POLICY: CHIB WAS VERY VAGUE IN DESCRIBING DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT. HE SAID THE GOP HAD STATED ITS POSITION (AS IN BHUTTO'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH MRS. GANDHI) AND THE INDIANS HAD REITERATED THEIR VIEW (AS IN THOSE SAME LETTERS). HE SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO NEW THEMES BY EITHER SIDE IN THE EXCHANGES ON THIS SUBJECT WITH WHICH, HE SMILED, THE USG WAS WELL FAMILIAR.

G. SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT: IN RESPONSE TO AN INDIAN QUERY ON THE PAKISTAN CANDIDACY, SHAHI SAID THE GOP FELT THAT, BECAUSE OF AFGHANISTAN'S POSSIBLE ATTEMPTING TO "INTERNATIONALIZE" THE PHUKHTOON ISSUE, IT WAS VITAL FOR THE GOP TO HAVE A SEAT ON THE SC THIS NEXT TERM. PARTICULARLY SINCE IRAN WAS NOT STANDING. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE INDO-PAK CONTEST WOULD NOT AFFECT THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ON BILATERAL ISSUES. THE INDIANS SAID, ACCORDING TO CHIB, IT WOULD NOT, BUT EXPRESSED REGRET THAT INDIA AND PAKISTAN COULD NOT SUPPORT RATHER THAN COMPETE AGAINST ONE ANOTHER.

H. NEXT MEETING: CHIB SAID IT WAS LEFT UP TO THE PAKISTAN DELEGATION TO SUGGEST THE NEXT MEETING. CHIB SAID HE HAD NO IDEA WHEN IT MIGHT BE.

4. COMMENT: IT SOUNDS TO US AS THOUGH THE INDIANS WERE SERIOUS IN EXPRESSING THEIR UNCERTAINTY ABOUT WHY THE CIVIL AIR PORTION OF THE TALKS WENT NOWHERE. THE INDIANS APPEAR TO HAVE FELT THEY HAD BEEN EXERTING SOME DIPLOMATIC EFFORT AND IMAGINATION IN THE DISCUSSIONS. THE SUGGESTION ON A PEACEFUL NUCLEAR BILATERAL TREATY WITH PAKISTAN MAY HAVE BEEN THE MOST USEFUL POINT OF THE DISCUSSIONS. THE INDIANS APPEAR TO BELIEVE THAT WHATEVER IT WAS THAT KEPT THE DISCUSSIONS FROM BEING MORE PRODUCTIVE MAY BLOW AWAY AND WERE PLEASED BY THE AMICABLE CLIMATE OF THE TALKS. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT THE INDIANS ARE PREPARED TO "WAIT TILL NEXT TIME" WITH SOME EXPECTATION MORE PROGRESS WILL BE MADE THEN.
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